

News

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USDL: 99-306

TRANSMISSION OF MATERIAL
IN THIS RELEASE IS EMBARGOED
UNTIL 8:30 A.M. (EDT),
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1999

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX—SEPTEMBER 1999

The Employment Cost Index (not seasonally adjusted) for September 1999 was 143.3 (June 1989=100), an increase of 3.1 percent from September 1998, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The Employment Cost Index (ECI) measures changes in compensation costs, which include wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

Quarterly changes, seasonally adjusted

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the 3-month increase in compensation costs for civilian workers (nonfarm private industry plus State and local government) was 0.8 percent during the June-September 1999 period, following a gain of 1.1 percent in March-June. The increase in wages and salaries was 0.9 percent during the June-September 1999 period, following a 1.2 percent increase in the previous 3-month period. Benefit costs rose 0.8 percent during the September 1999 quarter and 0.9 percent in the June 1999 quarter.

Table A. 3-month percent changes in Employment Cost Index, seasonally adjusted

Compensation Component	Dec. 1997	Mar. 1998	June 1998	Sep. 1998	Dec. 1998	Mar. 1999	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Civilian workers								
Compensation costs	1.0	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.4	1.1	0.8
Wages and salaries	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.7	0.5	1.2	0.9
Benefit costs	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.8
Private industry								
Compensation costs	1.1	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.4	1.2	0.8
Wages and salaries	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.2	0.7	0.4	1.2	0.8
Benefit costs	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.2	1.0	0.9
State and local government								
Compensation costs	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.8
Wages and salaries	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.9
Benefit costs	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.3

The 3-month increase in compensation costs for private industry workers was 0.8 percent during the June-September 1999 period. The gain in wages and salaries also was 0.8 percent in September; in June, it was 1.2 percent. Benefit costs showed a 3-month rise of 0.9 percent during the September quarter and 1.0 percent during the June period. (See tables A and 1.)

Compensation costs for State and local government workers increased 0.8 percent during the September 1999 period, the same as in the previous quarter. Wages and salaries rose 0.9 percent in September; in June, the increase was 1.0 percent. Benefit costs increased 0.3 percent in the September quarter, down from 0.6 percent in the previous quarter. The small increase in State and local government benefit costs was due, in part, to smaller increases in employer costs for retirement plans.

Over-the-year changes, not seasonally adjusted

Compensation costs for civilian workers (not seasonally adjusted) increased 3.1 percent for the year ended in September 1999. This compares with over-the-year increases of 3.7 percent in September 1998 and 3.0 percent in September 1997. Compensation costs in private industry rose 3.1 percent in September 1999, following increases of 3.8 percent in September 1998 and 3.2 percent in September 1997. Compensation costs in State and local government increased 2.9 percent for the year ended September 1999. Over-the-year increases were 3.0 percent in September 1998, and 2.4 percent in September 1997. (See tables B, 2, and 3.)

Nonfarm private industry

In private industry, wages and salaries rose 3.2 percent for the year ended September 1999, after increasing 4.3 percent in the year ended September 1998. (See tables B and 6.) Benefit costs for private industry workers increased 2.8 percent for the year ended in September 1999, compared with 2.6 percent in September 1998. (See chart A and tables B and 8.)

In private industry, over-the-year compensation cost increases were 3.2 percent for white-collar occupations, 3.1 percent for blue-collar occupations, and 2.7 percent for service occupations. Among the occupational groups, increases in compensation costs ranged from 2.5 percent for professional specialty and technical to 4.1 percent for executive, administrative, and managerial occupations. (See table 3.)

Table B. 12-month percent changes in Employment Cost Index, not seasonally adjusted

Compensation Component	Sep. 1994	Sep. 1995	Sep. 1996	Sep. 1997	Sep. 1998	Sep. 1999
Civilian workers						
Compensation costs	3.2	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.7	3.1
Wages and salaries	2.9	2.8	3.2	3.5	4.0	3.3
Benefit costs	3.8	2.2	1.8	1.9	2.6	2.7
Private industry						
Compensation costs	3.3	2.6	2.9	3.2	3.8	3.1
Wages and salaries	2.9	2.8	3.3	3.6	4.3	3.2
Benefit costs	4.0	2.1	1.8	2.0	2.6	2.8
State and local government						
Compensation costs	3.0	3.0	2.5	2.4	3.0	2.9
Wages and salaries	2.9	3.1	2.8	2.7	3.0	3.3
Benefit costs	3.2	2.5	1.9	1.5	2.8	2.0

For the year ended September 1999, the private industry compensation cost increase was 3.2 percent for service-producing industries and 2.9 percent for goods-producing industries. For the year ended in September 1998, compensation costs rose 4.3 percent in service-producing industries and 2.6 percent in goods-producing industries. Among industry divisions, over-the-year increases ranged from 2.4 percent in transportation and public utilities to 4.7 percent in finance, insurance, and real estate. (See table 3.)

The compensation cost change for nonunion workers in private industry was 3.2 percent, while the change for union workers was 2.5 percent. In service-producing industries, union compensation increased 2.2 percent, and nonunion compensation increased 3.4 percent. In goods-producing industries, the increase for union workers was 2.7 percent, and the increase for nonunion workers was 3.0 percent. Compensation in blue-collar occupations increased 2.4 percent for union workers and 3.5 percent for nonunion workers. (See table 4.)

State and local government

In State and local government, the September 1999 over-the-year increase in wages and salaries was 3.3 percent, as compared with a 3.0 percent increase in September 1998. Benefit costs for September 1999 increased 2.0 percent. In September 1998, the increase was 2.8 percent. (See tables 5 and 8.)

NOTES:

The ECI for December 1999 is scheduled to be released Thursday, January 27, 2000, at 8:30 a.m. (EST).

ECI data are available on the ECI home page (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>). To access data using Anonymous FTP, use the Internet address (<ftp://ftp.bls.gov>).

For technical assistance in using the BLS Internet site, send e-mail to (labstat.helpdesk@bls.gov). For ECI data requests, send e-mail to (ocltinfo@bls.gov).

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Employment Cost Index

Chart A. Changes in wages and salaries and benefit costs, private industry

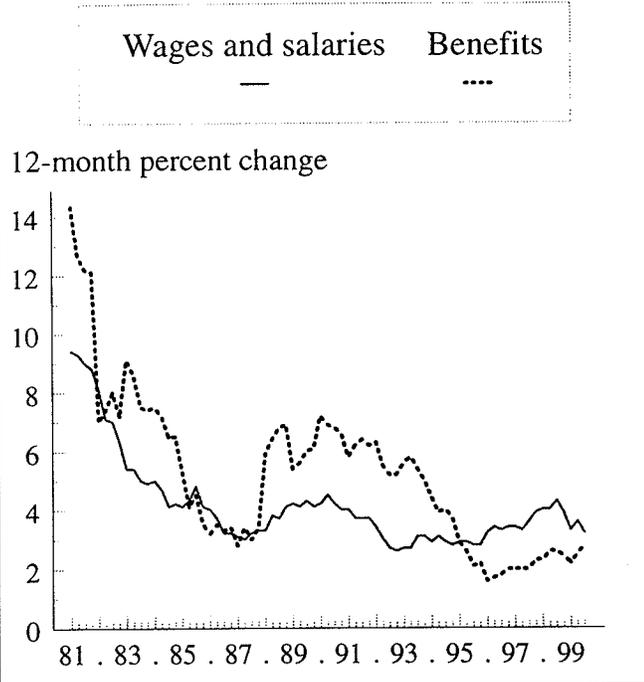


Chart B. Changes in wages and salaries and benefit costs, State and local government

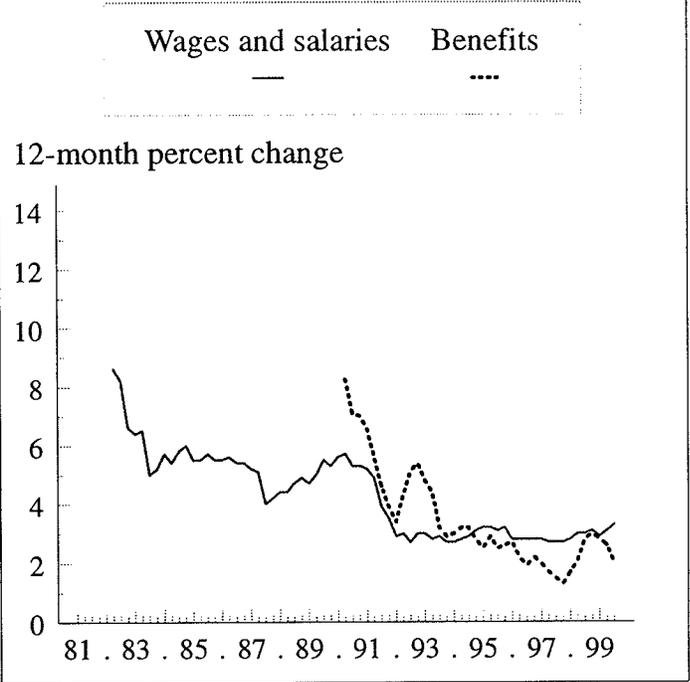


Chart C. Changes in compensation, private industry and State and local government

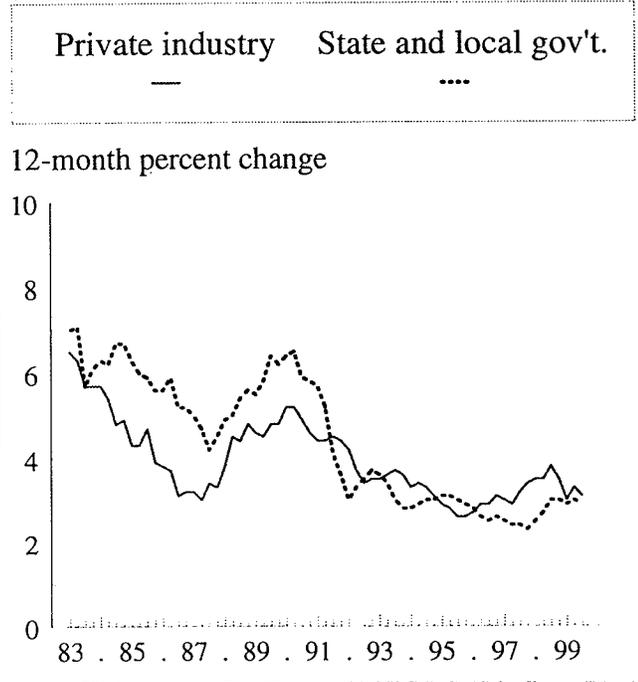


Chart D. Changes in wages and salaries, private industry and State and local government

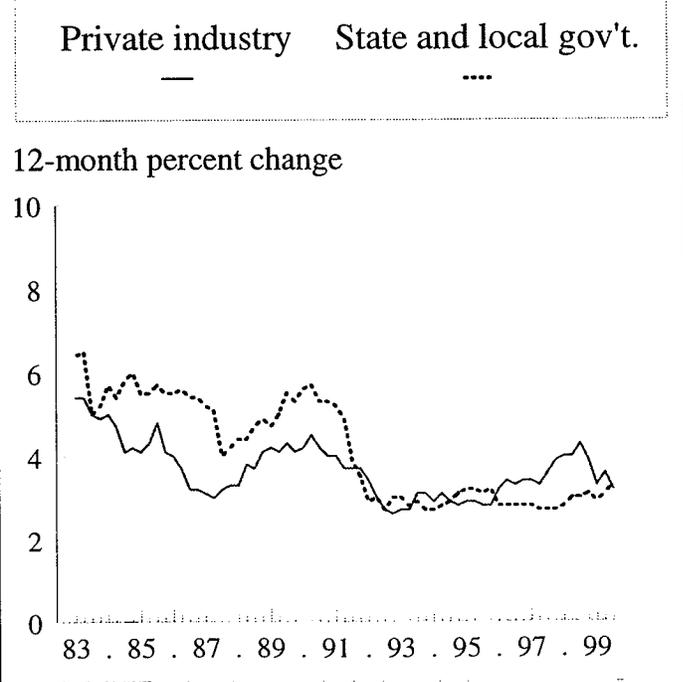


Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation¹, wages and salaries, and benefit costs by industry and occupational group

(Seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)		Percent changes for 3-months ended—							
	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Dec. 1997	Mar. 1998	June 1998	Sep. 1998	Dec. 1998	Mar. 1999	June 1999	Sep. 1999
TOTAL COMPENSATION										
Civilian workers	141.7	142.9	1.0	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.4	1.1	0.8
State and local government	141.5	142.6	.7	.7	.7	.7	.7	.6	.8	.8
Private industry	141.8	143.0	1.1	.7	.9	1.0	.7	.4	1.2	.8
Industry										
Goods producing ²	139.8	141.0	.4	.7	.8	.7	.5	.7	.6	.9
Construction ³	136.6	137.5	.5	.7	1.2	.4	1.2	1.0	.5	.7
Manufacturing	140.7	142.0	.6	.7	.6	.7	.6	.6	.6	.9
Durables	141.0	142.2	.6	.7	.6	.7	.6	.6	.7	.9
Nondurables	140.3	141.6	.7	.8	.6	.8	.5	.8	.6	.9
Service producing ⁴	142.7	143.9	1.4	.7	.9	1.2	.8	.1	1.4	.8
Transportation and public utilities ⁵	141.0	141.8	1.1	.9	1.2	.9	.7	.0	1.1	.6
Wholesale trade ³	144.4	146.3	.6	1.6	.6	1.7	1.6	-3	1.3	1.3
Retail trade	139.0	139.6	.9	.9	.8	1.0	.2	.7	1.5	.4
Finance, insurance, and real estate ^{3,6}	145.8	147.6	3.1	1.6	1.2	1.9	1.1	-7	3.0	1.2
Services	144.7	146.0	1.2	.5	.8	.9	.8	.5	.8	.9
Nonmanufacturing	142.0	143.2	1.4	.8	.9	1.1	.9	.2	1.3	.8
Occupational group										
White collar	144.1	145.5	1.4	.7	1.0	1.1	.9	.0	1.3	1.0
Blue collar	138.1	139.3	.7	.5	.8	.7	.7	.7	.8	.9
Service	140.4	140.5	.8	.9	.7	.8	.5	1.1	.9	.1
WAGES AND SALARIES										
Civilian workers	139.9	141.1	1.1	.9	.9	1.1	.7	.5	1.2	.9
State and local government	140.4	141.7	.7	.7	.7	.7	.8	.6	1.0	.9
Private industry	139.8	140.9	1.1	.9	1.0	1.2	.7	.4	1.2	.8
Industry										
Goods producing ^{2,6}	137.3	138.5	.5	1.1	.9	.8	.7	.8	.7	.9
Construction ³	131.7	132.7	.6	1.0	1.3	.2	1.0	1.2	.5	.8
Manufacturing ⁶	139.0	140.2	.7	1.1	.7	1.0	.6	.8	.8	.9
Durables ⁶	139.1	140.4	.5	1.1	.8	1.0	.7	.7	.9	.9
Nondurables	138.6	139.8	1.0	.9	.6	1.0	.7	.6	.6	.9
Service producing ⁴	140.8	142.0	1.4	.9	.9	1.4	.7	.3	1.4	.9
Transportation and public utilities ⁵	137.0	137.5	.9	.5	.8	1.0	.6	.1	1.3	.4
Wholesale trade ³	142.1	144.3	.5	1.9	.4	1.8	1.5	-4	.9	1.5
Retail trade	138.2	138.6	1.0	.8	.9	1.3	.1	.9	1.4	.3
Finance, insurance, and real estate ^{3,6}	142.4	144.5	3.3	1.5	1.7	2.4	1.2	-1.9	3.8	1.5
Services	143.3	144.4	1.3	.7	.9	1.1	.7	.9	.8	.8
Nonmanufacturing	139.7	140.8	1.4	.8	1.0	1.2	1.0	.2	1.3	.8

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation¹, wages and salaries, and benefit costs by industry and occupational group — Continued

(Seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)		Percent changes for 3-months ended—							
	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Dec. 1997	Mar. 1998	June 1998	Sep. 1998	Dec. 1998	Mar. 1999	June 1999	Sep. 1999
WAGES AND SALARIES—Continued										
Occupational group										
White collar	142.1	143.4	1.4	0.9	1.0	1.4	0.9	0.1	1.4	0.9
Blue collar ⁶	135.6	136.8	.6	.9	.8	.8	.6	.8	1.0	.9
Service	138.0	137.9	.9	.8	.8	.8	.6	1.2	1.0	-.1
BENEFIT COSTS										
Civilian workers	146.3	147.5	.9	.4	.7	.7	.6	.3	.9	.8
State and local government	144.3	144.7	.5	.7	.7	.9	.6	.6	.6	.3
Private industry	146.8	148.1	1.0	.4	.7	.6	.7	.2	1.0	.9
Industry										
Goods producing ²	145.0	146.2	.2	-.1	.5	.4	.3	.7	.5	.8
Manufacturing	144.3	145.7	.3	-.1	.4	.3	.1	.6	.5	1.0
Service producing ⁴	147.8	149.3	1.5	.5	.8	.8	.9	-.1	1.3	1.0
Nonmanufacturing	147.9	149.3	1.2	.6	.8	.8	.8	.1	1.2	.9
Occupational group										
White collar	149.3	151.0	1.3	.5	.7	.8	.8	.0	1.1	1.1
Blue collar	143.5	144.7	.2	.3	.6	.4	.5	.6	.7	.8
Service	147.6	148.2	.6	.8	.3	.6	.3	1.0	.9	.4

¹ Includes wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

² Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.

³ Average standard errors (SE) for the unadjusted series upon which this series is based exceeded 0.3 percent for 3-month changes and 0.6 percent for 12-month changes for the five years ending December 1996. To assist users in ascertaining the reliability of the series, SEs for estimates in this news release (excluding seasonally adjusted series) will be available on the

Internet site (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>). All series will continue to be published until further notice.

⁴ Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and service industries.

⁵ Estimates for transportation and public utilities reflect the changes in SIC coding. See Explanatory Notes for further information.

⁶ No identifiable seasonality was found for this series.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for total compensation¹ for civilian and State and local government workers by industry and occupational group

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Civilian workers	139.0	141.8	143.3	1.2	1.0	1.1	3.7	3.2	3.1
Excluding sales occupations	138.8	141.7	143.2	1.0	.9	1.1	3.4	3.1	3.2
Industry									
Goods producing ²	137.2	140.0	141.2	.7	.7	.9	2.7	2.7	2.9
Manufacturing	138.2	140.9	142.1	.7	.7	.9	2.7	2.7	2.8
Service producing ³	139.6	142.4	144.0	1.4	1.1	1.1	4.0	3.4	3.2
Services	140.8	143.2	145.1	1.3	.6	1.3	3.2	3.0	3.1
Health services	139.1	141.4	142.7	.4	.6	.9	1.8	2.1	2.6
Hospitals	139.4	142.2	143.4	.9	.6	.8	2.8	2.9	2.9
Educational services	140.2	141.7	144.6	1.8	.3	2.0	2.7	2.9	3.1
Public administration ⁴	138.9	141.5	142.4	1.1	.5	.6	3.6	3.0	2.5
Nonmanufacturing	139.0	141.9	143.4	1.2	1.0	1.1	3.9	3.4	3.2
Occupational group									
White collar	140.6	143.3	145.0	1.4	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.3	3.1
Excluding sales	140.6	143.4	145.1	1.2	.8	1.2	3.7	3.2	3.2
Professional specialty and technical	140.0	142.2	143.9	1.2	.6	1.2	3.1	2.8	2.8
Executive, administrative, and managerial ...	141.7	145.4	147.3	1.4	1.3	1.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
Administrative support, including clerical	140.4	143.4	144.7	.8	.6	.9	3.4	2.9	3.1
Blue collar	135.3	138.3	139.5	.7	.9	.9	2.7	3.0	3.1
Service	139.4	142.4	143.1	1.1	.8	.5	3.6	3.3	2.7
State and local government	139.0	141.0	143.1	1.5	.4	1.5	3.0	3.0	2.9
Industry									
Services	139.0	140.5	143.2	1.8	.4	1.9	2.7	2.9	3.0
Excluding schools ^{5,6}	138.7	140.3	142.6	1.8	.5	1.6	3.2	3.0	2.8
Health services	140.3	142.0	144.2	1.7	.6	1.5	3.2	2.9	2.8
Hospitals	140.7	142.7	144.8	1.7	.7	1.5	3.2	3.1	2.9
Educational services	138.8	140.3	143.1	1.7	.3	2.0	2.5	2.8	3.1
Schools	139.1	140.6	143.5	1.8	.3	2.1	2.5	2.9	3.2
Elementary and secondary	138.8	140.0	142.9	1.9	.3	2.1	2.4	2.8	3.0
Colleges and universities	140.1	142.1	144.8	1.4	.3	1.9	2.8	2.9	3.4
Public administration ⁴	138.9	141.5	142.4	1.1	.5	.6	3.6	3.0	2.5
Occupational group									
White collar	138.4	140.2	142.6	1.6	.3	1.7	2.7	2.9	3.0
Professional specialty and technical	137.7	139.3	142.0	1.5	.4	1.9	2.3	2.7	3.1
Executive, administrative, and managerial ...	140.4	142.8	144.5	1.8	.1	1.2	3.5	3.6	2.9
Administrative support, including clerical	139.5	141.3	143.0	1.7	-.1	1.2	3.1	3.0	2.5
Blue collar	136.8	139.5	140.9	1.2	.5	1.0	2.6	3.2	3.0
Service	143.0	145.3	146.7	1.4	.7	1.0	4.4	3.0	2.6

¹ Includes wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

² Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.

³ Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; service industries; and public administration.

⁴ Includes executive, legislative, judicial, administrative, and regulatory activities of State and local governments, SIC's 91 through 96.

⁵ Average standard errors (SE) for the series exceed 0.3 percent for 3-month changes and 0.6 percent for 12-month changes for the five years ending December 1996. To assist users in ascertaining the reliability of the series, SEs for estimates in this news release (excluding seasonally adjusted series) will be available on the Internet site (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>).

All series will continue to be published until further notice.

⁶ Formerly called hospitals and other services.

Table 3. Employment Cost Index for total compensation¹ for private industry workers, by industry and occupational group

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Private industry workers	139.0	142.0	143.3	1.1	1.1	0.9	3.8	3.3	3.1
Excluding sales occupations	138.8	141.9	143.2	.9	1.0	.9	3.5	3.2	3.2
Industry									
Goods producing²	137.1	139.9	141.1	.7	.7	.9	2.6	2.7	2.9
Excluding sales	136.5	139.3	140.5	.7	.7	.9	2.6	2.7	2.9
White collar	139.7	142.7	143.9	.6	.7	.8	3.0	2.8	3.0
Excluding sales	138.3	141.3	142.5	.7	.7	.8	2.8	2.8	3.0
Blue collar	135.5	138.3	139.4	.7	.9	.8	2.3	2.7	2.9
Construction ³	133.4	136.9	137.9	.5	1.0	.7	2.9	3.2	3.4
Manufacturing	138.2	140.9	142.1	.7	.7	.9	2.7	2.7	2.8
White collar	140.1	143.0	144.3	.7	.8	.9	3.2	2.8	3.0
Excluding sales	138.3	141.3	142.5	.7	.9	.8	2.8	2.9	3.0
Blue collar	136.8	139.4	140.5	.7	.6	.8	2.3	2.6	2.7
Durables	138.5	141.0	142.3	.8	.8	.9	2.6	2.6	2.7
Aircraft manufacturing (SIC 3721)	139.3	142.4	143.7	.3	1.4	.9	1.1	2.5	3.2
White collar	137.4	139.5	139.8	.2	1.6	.2	2.1	1.8	1.7
Blue collar	140.8	145.7	149.0	.5	1.0	2.3	-.7	4.0	5.8
Nondurables	137.6	140.4	141.5	.7	.6	.8	2.9	2.7	2.8
Service producing ⁴	139.6	142.8	144.1	1.3	1.3	.9	4.3	3.6	3.2
Excluding sales	140.0	143.3	144.6	1.1	1.1	.9	4.1	3.5	3.3
White collar	141.2	144.3	145.8	1.4	1.4	1.0	4.7	3.6	3.3
Excluding sales	142.2	145.5	147.0	1.1	1.2	1.0	4.3	3.5	3.4
Blue collar	134.3	137.8	139.1	.8	1.2	.9	3.3	3.5	3.6
Service	137.0	140.5	140.8	.9	.9	.2	3.2	3.5	2.8
Transportation and public utilities ⁵	138.5	140.9	141.8	1.0	.9	.6	4.2	2.8	2.4
Transportation ^{3,5}	136.7	138.1	138.7	1.3	1.0	.4	3.5	2.4	1.5
Public utilities	140.7	144.6	145.7	.7	.8	.8	5.2	3.5	3.6
Communications	140.5	144.9	146.1	.9	1.1	.8	6.6	4.1	4.0
Electric, gas, and sanitary services	141.0	144.2	145.1	.5	.6	.6	3.7	2.8	2.9
Wholesale and retail trade	137.6	141.1	142.2	1.3	1.6	.8	3.9	3.9	3.3
Excluding sales	138.1	141.9	142.8	1.3	1.4	.6	3.8	4.1	3.4
Wholesale trade ³	140.8	144.6	146.3	1.6	1.3	1.2	4.6	4.3	3.9
Excluding sales	140.0	144.0	145.8	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.1	4.2	4.1
Retail trade	135.9	139.1	140.0	1.1	1.7	.6	3.7	3.5	3.0
General merchandise stores ³	133.2	135.6	137.2	.2	.4	1.2	3.6	2.0	3.0
Food stores ³	133.7	135.7	137.0	.6	1.0	1.0	3.0	2.1	2.5
Finance, insurance, and real estate ³	141.0	145.8	147.6	1.9	3.0	1.2	8.0	5.3	4.7
Excluding sales	143.2	148.8	151.0	1.3	2.2	1.5	7.3	5.3	5.4
Banking, savings and loan, and other credit agencies ³	148.4	155.4	159.3	2.1	4.4	2.5	11.5	7.0	7.3
Insurance ³	141.9	144.0	144.5	2.2	1.6	.3	6.6	3.7	1.8
Excluding sales	141.6	145.4	146.2	.5	.6	.6	3.1	3.2	3.2
Services	141.8	144.6	146.1	1.1	.8	1.0	3.5	3.1	3.0
Business services ³	143.5	148.7	150.7	2.0	.8	1.3	5.3	5.7	5.0
Health services	139.0	141.4	142.6	.2	.6	.8	1.5	1.9	2.6
Hospitals	139.1	142.1	143.0	.7	.6	.6	2.7	2.8	2.8
Nursing homes	—	—	—	1.0	.9	.9	3.3	3.8	3.7
Educational services	147.0	148.7	152.2	2.2	.3	2.4	3.8	3.3	3.5
Colleges and universities	147.8	149.6	152.6	2.1	.3	2.0	3.7	3.3	3.2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Employment Cost Index for total compensation¹ for private industry workers, by industry and occupational group — Continued

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Industry—Continued									
Nonmanufacturing industries	138.9	142.0	143.4	1.2	1.2	1.0	4.2	3.5	3.2
White collar	141.1	144.1	145.6	1.4	1.3	1.0	4.6	3.5	3.2
Excluding sales	142.0	145.3	146.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	4.3	3.4	3.4
Blue collar	133.4	136.8	138.0	.8	1.2	.9	3.1	3.3	3.4
Service	136.9	140.4	140.7	.9	.9	.2	3.2	3.5	2.8
Occupational group									
White collar	141.1	144.1	145.6	1.2	1.2	1.0	4.4	3.4	3.2
Excluding sales	141.3	144.5	146.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	3.3	3.3
Professional specialty and technical	141.6	144.1	145.2	1.1	.8	.8	3.6	2.9	2.5
Executive, administrative, and managerial ...	141.9	145.8	147.7	1.4	1.5	1.3	5.0	4.1	4.1
Sales ³	140.4	142.6	144.1	2.3	2.1	1.1	6.2	3.9	2.6
Administrative support, including clerical	140.6	143.7	145.0	.7	.8	.9	3.5	2.9	3.1
Blue collar	135.2	138.2	139.4	.7	.9	.9	2.7	2.9	3.1
Precision production, craft, and repair	135.4	138.4	139.6	.7	.9	.9	2.8	3.0	3.1
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	135.7	138.4	139.9	.7	.8	1.1	2.6	2.7	3.1
Transportation and material moving	130.7	133.6	134.4	.6	1.5	.6	2.1	2.8	2.8
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	138.5	142.3	143.2	.7	.9	.6	3.2	3.4	3.4
Service	137.3	140.6	141.0	1.0	.8	.3	3.2	3.4	2.7
Production and nonsupervisory occupations⁶	138.0	140.8	141.9	1.0	1.1	.8	3.6	3.1	2.8

¹ Includes wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

² Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.

³ Average standard errors (SE) for the series exceed 0.3 percent for 3-month changes and 0.6 percent for 12-month changes for the five years ending December 1996. To assist users in ascertaining the reliability of the series, SEs for estimates in this news release (excluding seasonally adjusted series) will be available on the Internet site (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>). All series will continue to be published until further notice.

⁴ Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale

and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and service industries.

⁵ Estimates for transportation and public utilities reflect the changes in SIC coding. See Explanatory Notes for further information.

⁶ This series has the same industry and occupational coverage as the Hourly Earnings Index, which was discontinued in January 1989.

NOTE: Dashes indicate data not available.

Table 4. Employment Cost Index for total compensation¹ for private industry workers, by bargaining status, region, and area

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Bargaining status, region, and area	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Bargaining status									
Union	136.8	139.0	140.2	1.1	0.7	0.9	2.7	2.7	2.5
Blue-collar occupations	134.6	136.7	137.8	1.0	.8	.8	2.6	2.6	2.4
Goods-producing industries ²	135.6	138.2	139.2	1.0	1.1	.7	2.5	2.9	2.7
Service-producing industries ³	138.0	139.7	141.0	1.3	.4	.9	3.0	2.6	2.2
Manufacturing	136.0	138.1	139.1	1.0	.8	.7	2.3	2.6	2.3
Blue-collar occupations	135.5	137.5	138.5	1.0	.7	.7	2.2	2.5	2.2
Nonmanufacturing	136.9	139.2	140.3	1.2	.8	.8	3.0	2.9	2.5
Nonunion	139.3	142.5	143.8	1.1	1.2	.9	4.0	3.4	3.2
Blue-collar occupations	135.5	139.0	140.3	.6	1.0	.9	2.8	3.2	3.5
Goods-producing industries ²	137.7	140.5	141.8	.6	.6	.9	2.8	2.6	3.0
Service-producing industries ³	139.7	143.0	144.4	1.2	1.3	1.0	4.5	3.6	3.4
Manufacturing	138.9	141.7	143.0	.7	.7	.9	2.8	2.7	3.0
Blue-collar occupations	137.4	140.2	141.6	.5	.5	1.0	2.4	2.6	3.1
Nonmanufacturing	139.1	142.4	143.8	1.2	1.3	1.0	4.3	3.6	3.4
Region⁴									
Northeast	138.7	141.5	143.2	1.2	.7	1.2	3.5	3.3	3.2
South	137.6	140.7	141.8	.9	1.2	.8	3.8	3.2	3.1
Midwest	140.9	143.6	145.0	.9	1.3	1.0	3.5	2.9	2.9
West	138.5	142.1	143.3	1.4	1.3	.8	4.5	4.0	3.5
Area									
Metropolitan	139.1	142.0	143.3	1.2	1.1	.9	3.9	3.3	3.0
Other	138.2	141.8	143.1	.8	.9	.9	3.3	3.4	3.5

¹ Includes wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

² Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.

³ Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and service industries.

⁴ The regional coverage is as follows: Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont; South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia,

and West Virginia; Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; and West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

NOTE: The indexes for these series are not strictly comparable to those for the aggregate, occupation, and industry series.

Table 5. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries for civilian and State and local government workers, by industry and occupational group

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Civilian workers	136.8	139.8	141.3	1.3	1.0	1.1	4.0	3.6	3.3
Excluding sales occupations	136.6	139.6	141.1	1.3	.9	1.1	3.7	3.5	3.3
Industry									
Goods producing ¹	134.4	137.4	138.6	.8	.8	.9	3.5	3.1	3.1
Manufacturing	136.0	139.0	140.2	1.0	.8	.9	3.6	3.3	3.1
Service producing ²	137.8	140.7	142.3	1.5	1.1	1.1	4.2	3.7	3.3
Services	139.6	142.3	144.1	1.5	.6	1.3	3.6	3.4	3.2
Health services	137.6	139.7	140.9	.8	.6	.9	2.5	2.3	2.4
Hospitals	136.4	138.8	140.1	1.0	.5	.9	2.9	2.7	2.7
Educational services	139.1	140.6	143.7	1.9	.3	2.2	2.8	3.0	3.3
Public administration ³	134.8	137.8	139.5	1.2	.7	1.2	3.5	3.5	3.5
Nonmanufacturing	137.0	139.9	141.5	1.4	1.1	1.1	4.2	3.6	3.3
Occupational group									
White collar	138.8	141.6	143.3	1.5	1.1	1.2	4.4	3.6	3.2
Excluding sales	138.8	141.8	143.5	1.3	.9	1.2	4.0	3.5	3.4
Professional specialty and technical	138.5	141.0	142.6	1.4	.6	1.1	3.4	3.2	3.0
Executive, administrative, and managerial ...	140.5	143.8	145.9	1.6	1.6	1.5	5.2	4.0	3.8
Administrative support, including clerical	137.5	140.9	142.3	1.0	.6	1.0	3.6	3.5	3.5
Blue collar	132.6	135.8	137.0	.9	1.0	.9	3.3	3.3	3.3
Service	136.1	139.4	140.1	1.2	.8	.5	3.5	3.6	2.9
State and local government	137.6	139.6	142.2	1.6	.4	1.9	3.0	3.1	3.3
Industry									
Services	138.4	139.9	142.9	1.8	.3	2.1	2.7	2.9	3.3
Excluding schools ^{4,5}	137.8	139.6	142.1	1.7	.4	1.8	3.4	3.0	3.1
Health services	138.7	140.4	142.8	1.6	.5	1.7	3.6	2.9	3.0
Hospitals	138.6	140.6	142.8	1.5	.6	1.6	3.7	3.0	3.0
Educational services	138.4	139.8	142.9	1.9	.2	2.2	2.7	2.9	3.3
Schools	138.5	140.0	143.1	1.8	.3	2.2	2.7	2.9	3.3
Elementary and secondary	138.7	139.9	143.1	1.9	.3	2.3	2.5	2.8	3.2
Colleges and universities	137.7	139.8	142.6	1.6	.1	2.0	3.1	3.2	3.6
Public administration ³	134.8	137.8	139.5	1.2	.7	1.2	3.5	3.5	3.5
Occupational group									
White collar	137.6	139.3	142.1	1.8	.3	2.0	2.9	3.0	3.3
Professional specialty and technical	137.9	139.4	142.5	1.7	.4	2.2	2.6	2.8	3.3
Executive, administrative, and managerial ...	138.0	140.5	142.7	1.8	.3	1.6	3.7	3.6	3.4
Administrative support, including clerical	135.4	137.5	139.6	1.6	.1	1.5	3.0	3.2	3.1
Blue collar	135.1	137.6	139.4	1.2	.5	1.3	3.0	3.1	3.2
Service	139.2	142.1	144.1	1.5	.7	1.4	3.7	3.6	3.5

¹ Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.² Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; service industries; and public administration.³ Includes executive, legislative, judicial, administrative, and regulatory activities of State and local governments, SIC's 91 through 96.⁴ Average standard errors (SE) for the series exceed 0.3 percent for3-month changes and 0.6 percent for 12-month changes for the five years ending December 1996. To assist users in ascertaining the reliability of the series, SEs for estimates in this news release (excluding seasonally adjusted series) will be available on the Internet site (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>). All series will continue to be published until further notice.⁵ Formerly called hospitals and other services.

Table 6. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries for private industry workers by industry and occupational group

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Private industry workers	136.6	139.7	141.0	1.3	1.2	0.9	4.3	3.6	3.2
Excluding sales occupations	136.3	139.6	140.8	1.1	1.0	.9	3.9	3.6	3.3
Industry									
Goods producing ¹	134.3	137.3	138.5	.8	.7	.9	3.4	3.1	3.1
Excluding sales	133.6	136.6	137.8	.8	.8	.9	3.3	3.1	3.1
White collar	137.4	140.5	141.7	.8	.8	.9	3.9	3.1	3.1
Excluding sales	135.7	138.8	140.1	.8	.7	.9	3.7	3.1	3.2
Blue collar	132.3	135.4	136.6	.8	.8	.9	3.0	3.1	3.3
Construction ²	128.5	131.9	133.0	.3	.9	.8	3.0	3.0	3.5
Manufacturing	136.0	139.0	140.2	1.0	.8	.9	3.6	3.3	3.1
White collar	138.3	141.4	142.7	1.1	.9	.9	4.1	3.4	3.2
Excluding sales	136.3	139.6	140.8	1.0	.9	.9	3.8	3.4	3.3
Blue collar	134.3	137.2	138.4	.9	.7	.9	3.1	3.1	3.1
Durables	135.9	139.1	140.4	1.0	.9	.9	3.6	3.4	3.3
Aircraft manufacturing (SIC 3721)	137.2	141.5	142.7	.2	1.5	.8	2.9	3.4	4.0
White collar	133.9	138.0	138.3	.1	1.8	.2	3.6	3.2	3.3
Blue collar	141.0	145.5	148.9	.4	.7	2.3	1.9	3.6	5.6
Nondurables	136.0	138.7	139.7	.8	.5	.7	3.5	2.8	2.7
Service producing ³	137.6	140.8	142.1	1.5	1.4	.9	4.6	3.8	3.3
Excluding sales	137.9	141.4	142.6	1.2	1.1	.8	4.2	3.8	3.4
White collar	139.2	142.3	143.8	1.6	1.4	1.1	5.0	3.9	3.3
Excluding sales	140.2	143.7	145.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	4.5	3.8	3.5
Blue collar	132.4	135.9	137.0	1.0	1.1	.8	3.5	3.7	3.5
Service	134.2	137.8	138.0	.9	.8	.1	3.4	3.6	2.8
Transportation and public utilities ⁴	134.3	136.8	137.5	1.1	1.0	.5	3.2	3.0	2.4
Transportation ^{2,4}	132.4	133.7	134.4	1.5	1.1	.5	3.0	2.5	1.5
Public utilities	136.5	140.6	141.5	.6	1.0	.6	3.4	3.6	3.7
Communications	136.7	141.1	141.9	.7	1.2	.6	3.7	3.9	3.8
Electric, gas, and sanitary services	136.3	140.0	140.9	.5	.8	.6	3.1	3.2	3.4
Wholesale and retail trade	136.6	139.6	140.7	1.5	1.4	.8	4.4	3.7	3.0
Excluding sales	137.6	141.1	141.8	1.5	1.1	.5	4.1	4.1	3.1
Wholesale trade ²	139.3	142.3	144.3	1.6	1.1	1.4	4.7	3.8	3.6
Excluding sales	139.6	143.0	144.8	1.3	.8	1.3	4.3	3.8	3.7
Retail trade	135.2	138.3	138.9	1.4	1.5	.4	4.1	3.8	2.7
General merchandise stores ²	132.2	134.3	135.6	.5	.4	1.0	4.3	2.1	2.6
Food stores ²	131.7	132.8	133.9	.9	.8	.8	3.9	1.8	1.7
Finance, insurance, and real estate ²	138.1	142.4	144.5	2.4	3.8	1.5	9.3	5.6	4.6
Excluding sales	139.7	144.8	147.5	1.6	2.7	1.9	8.0	5.3	5.6
Banking, savings and loan, and other credit agencies ²	147.0	154.5	159.2	2.7	5.7	3.0	14.0	7.9	8.3
Insurance ²	138.7	139.8	140.2	2.9	1.7	.3	7.8	3.7	1.1
Excluding sales	136.6	139.9	140.9	.7	.6	.7	2.8	3.1	3.1
Services	140.0	143.2	144.5	1.2	.7	.9	3.9	3.5	3.2
Business services ²	141.8	146.3	148.5	1.9	.6	1.5	5.1	5.1	4.7
Health services	137.5	139.6	140.6	.7	.6	.7	2.4	2.3	2.3
Hospitals	135.8	138.3	139.3	.8	.5	.7	2.7	2.7	2.6
Nursing homes	—	—	—	1.0	.9	.9	3.9	3.9	3.8
Educational services	142.8	144.2	147.5	2.3	.2	2.3	3.6	3.3	3.3
Colleges and universities	142.8	144.4	147.2	2.2	.2	1.9	3.6	3.4	3.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 6. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries for private industry workers by industry and occupational group — Continued

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Industry and occupational group	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Industry—Continued									
Nonmanufacturing industries	136.5	139.7	141.0	1.3	1.3	0.9	4.4	3.7	3.3
White collar	138.9	142.0	143.5	1.5	1.4	1.1	4.9	3.8	3.3
Excluding sales	139.8	143.2	144.6	1.2	1.1	1.0	4.5	3.7	3.4
Blue collar	130.5	134.0	135.1	.8	1.2	.8	3.2	3.5	3.5
Service	134.1	137.7	137.9	.9	.9	.1	3.4	3.6	2.8
Occupational group									
White collar	139.0	142.1	143.5	1.5	1.3	1.0	4.7	3.7	3.2
Excluding sales	139.1	142.5	143.9	1.2	1.1	1.0	4.3	3.6	3.5
Professional specialty and technical	138.7	141.8	142.6	1.2	.8	.6	3.7	3.4	2.8
Executive, administrative, and managerial ...	140.9	144.3	146.4	1.6	1.7	1.5	5.5	4.0	3.9
Sales ²	138.8	140.5	142.1	2.7	2.3	1.1	6.9	3.9	2.4
Administrative support, including clerical	137.9	141.4	142.7	.9	.7	.9	3.8	3.4	3.5
Blue collar	132.4	135.6	136.8	.8	1.0	.9	3.2	3.3	3.3
Precision production, craft, and repair	132.3	135.6	136.7	.8	1.0	.8	3.2	3.4	3.3
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	133.8	136.7	138.3	.8	.7	1.2	3.3	3.0	3.4
Transportation and material moving	127.6	131.0	131.9	.9	1.5	.7	2.8	3.6	3.4
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	135.1	138.3	139.4	1.0	.7	.8	3.8	3.4	3.2
Service	134.4	137.8	138.0	1.1	.8	.1	3.5	3.6	2.7
Production and nonsupervisory occupations⁵	135.2	138.2	139.3	1.2	1.0	.8	3.9	3.4	3.0

¹ Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.² Average standard errors (SE) for the series exceed 0.3 percent for 3-month changes and 0.6 percent for 12-month changes for the five years ending December 1996. To assist users in ascertaining the reliability of the series, SEs for estimates in this news release (excluding seasonally adjusted series) will be available on the Internet site (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>).³ All series will continue to be published until further notice.³ Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale

and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and service industries.

⁴ Estimates for transportation and public utilities reflect the changes in SIC coding. See Explanatory Notes for further information.⁵ This series has the same industry and occupational coverage as the Hourly Earnings Index, which was discontinued in January 1989.

NOTE: Dashes indicate data not available.

Table 7. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries for private industry workers by bargaining status, region, and area

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Bargaining status, region, and area	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Bargaining status									
Union	132.4	134.7	135.7	1.3	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.1	2.5
Blue-collar occupations	129.9	132.5	133.6	1.1	1.0	.8	3.1	3.1	2.8
Goods-producing industries ¹	131.0	133.8	134.9	1.2	1.1	.8	3.5	3.4	3.0
Service-producing industries ²	134.1	135.8	136.8	1.4	.3	.7	2.8	2.7	2.0
Manufacturing	132.2	134.7	135.8	1.4	.8	.8	3.4	3.3	2.7
Blue-collar occupations	131.4	134.1	135.1	1.1	.8	.7	3.0	3.2	2.8
Nonmanufacturing	132.4	134.6	135.6	1.2	.7	.7	3.0	2.9	2.4
Nonunion	137.4	140.7	142.0	1.3	1.2	.9	4.4	3.7	3.3
Blue-collar occupations	134.0	137.5	138.7	.8	1.0	.9	3.3	3.5	3.5
Goods-producing industries ¹	135.7	138.8	140.0	.7	.7	.9	3.4	3.0	3.2
Service-producing industries ²	137.9	141.3	142.6	1.5	1.4	.9	4.8	4.0	3.4
Manufacturing	137.3	140.5	141.7	.8	.8	.9	3.5	3.2	3.2
Blue-collar occupations	136.2	139.2	140.5	.8	.5	.9	3.2	3.0	3.2
Nonmanufacturing	137.1	140.5	141.8	1.3	1.4	.9	4.6	3.8	3.4
Region³									
Northeast	135.4	138.2	139.9	1.2	.8	1.2	3.6	3.3	3.3
South	136.5	139.4	140.2	1.2	1.1	.6	4.5	3.3	2.7
Midwest	137.5	141.0	142.4	1.1	1.5	1.0	4.0	3.7	3.6
West	136.7	140.2	141.3	1.6	1.4	.8	5.0	4.2	3.4
Area									
Metropolitan	136.9	139.9	141.2	1.3	1.2	.9	4.4	3.6	3.1
Other	134.7	138.4	139.8	1.0	.9	1.0	3.3	3.7	3.8

¹ Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.² Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and service industries.³ The regional coverage is as follows: Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont; South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia; Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan,

Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; and West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

NOTE: The indexes for these series are not strictly comparable to those for the aggregate, occupation, and industry series.

Table 8. Employment Cost Index for benefits for civilian, State and local government, and private industry workers by industry, occupational group, and bargaining status

(Not seasonally adjusted data)

Industry, occupational group, and bargaining status	Indexes (June 1989=100)			Percent changes for—					
	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	3 months ended—			12 months ended—		
				Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999	Sep. 1998	June 1999	Sep. 1999
Civilian workers	144.0	146.6	147.9	0.7	0.9	0.9	2.6	2.5	2.7
State and local government	142.1	144.0	145.0	1.3	.3	.7	2.8	2.6	2.0
Private industry	144.5	147.3	148.6	.6	1.0	.9	2.6	2.5	2.8
Industry									
Goods producing ¹	143.0	145.2	146.3	.4	.7	.8	1.1	1.9	2.3
Service producing ²	144.9	147.9	149.4	.8	1.2	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.1
Manufacturing	142.6	144.5	145.7	.1	.6	.8	.8	1.5	2.2
Aircraft manufacturing (SIC 3721)	143.8	144.3	145.6	.5	1.2	.9	-2.6	.8	1.3
White collar ³	145.5	142.7	142.9	.3	1.0	.1	-9	-1.6	-1.8
Blue collar	140.7	146.3	149.5	.9	1.5	2.2	-5.1	4.9	6.3
Nonmanufacturing	145.0	148.0	149.4	.8	1.2	.9	3.4	2.8	3.0
Occupational group									
White collar	146.6	149.4	151.0	.7	1.0	1.1	3.2	2.6	3.0
Blue collar	141.0	143.6	144.8	.4	1.0	.8	1.6	2.3	2.7
Service ³	144.7	147.6	148.4	.7	.9	.5	2.3	2.7	2.6
Bargaining status									
Union	145.0	146.9	148.3	.8	.8	1.0	2.0	2.2	2.3
Nonunion	144.2	147.1	148.5	.6	1.0	1.0	2.9	2.6	3.0

¹ Includes mining, construction, and manufacturing.

² Includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and service industries.

³ Average standard errors (SE) for the series exceed 0.3 percent for 3-month changes and 0.6 percent for 12-month changes for the five years

ending December 1996. To assist users in ascertaining the reliability of the series, SEs for estimates in this news release (excluding seasonally adjusted series) will be available on the Internet site (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>). All series will continue to be published until further notice.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The wage and salary series and the benefit cost series provide the change for the two components of compensation.

Wages and salaries are defined as the hourly straight-time wage rate or, for workers not paid on an hourly basis, straight-time earnings divided by the corresponding hours. Straight-time wage and salary rates are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime and for work on weekends and holidays, shift differentials, and nonproduction bonuses such as lump-sum payments provided in lieu of wage increases. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time wage and salary rates.

Benefits covered by the ECI are: Paid leave--vacations, holidays, sick leave, and other leave; supplemental pay--premium pay for work in addition to the regular work schedule (such as overtime, weekends, and holidays), shift differentials, and nonproduction bonuses (such as lump-sum payments provided in lieu of wage increases); insurance benefits--life, health, short-term disability, and long-term disability; retirement and savings benefits--defined benefit and defined contribution plans; legally required benefits--Social Security, Federal and State unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation; and other benefits--severance pay and supplemental unemployment plans.

The ECI provides data for the civilian economy, which includes the total nonfarm economy except private households and the Federal government. The private industry series and the State and local government series provide data for the two sectors separately.

Data for this quarter were collected from a probability sample of approximately 27,900 occupational observations within about 6,500 sample establishments in private industry and approximately 4,100 occupations within about 800 sample establishments in State and local governments. Data are collected for the pay period including the 12th day of the survey months of March, June, September, and December.

The sampled establishments are classified by industry categories based on the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC), as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. In 1996, some establishments in motor freight transportation and warehousing (SIC 42), transportation by air (SIC 45), and transportation services (SIC 47) were reclassified into air courier services (SIC 4513), which includes support establishments. While the establishments in question were engaged in the delivery of letters, parcels, and packages, they were operated by enterprises engaged in furnishing air delivery of individually addressed letters, parcels, and packages. The ECI sample introduced these reclassifications with the June 1998 reference period.

Within an establishment, specific job categories are selected to represent broader occupational groups. Since March 1995, the jobs are classified according to the 1990 Census, which differs little from the 1980 Census. From June 1986 through December 1994, the jobs were classified according to definitions used in the 1980 Census. Prior to June 1986, they were classified according to the 1970 Census. Differences between the two classification systems are slight, as indicated in the article "Introducing New Weights for the Employment Cost Index," in the June 1985 issue of the Monthly Labor Review.

Fixed employment weights are used each quarter to calculate the most aggregate indexes--civilian, private, and State and local government. These fixed weights are also used to derive all of the industry and occupation series indexes. Since March 1995, 1990 employment counts, primarily from the Bureau's Occupational Employment Statistics survey, have been used. A description of the reweighting is included in an article "Introducing 1990 Weights for the Employment Cost Index," published in the June 1995 issue of Compensation and Working Conditions (available upon request). From June 1986 through December 1994, employment counts from the 1980 Census were used as weights. Before June 1986, employment counts from the 1970 Census were used.

For the series based on bargaining status, region, and area size, employment data are not available. The employment weights are reallocated within these series each quarter based on the current ECI sample. The indexes for these series, consequently, are not strictly comparable to those for the aggregate, industry, and

occupation series. A fuller explanation of the calculation of index numbers appears in an article, "Estimation Procedures for the Employment Cost Index," in the May 1982 issue of the Monthly Labor Review.

Beginning with the March 1990 ECI release, indexes were rebased to June 1989=100. A description of the rebasing is included in the article "Employment Cost Index Rebased to June 1989," in the April 1990 issue of the Monthly Labor Review.

Beginning with the December 1990 ECI release, seasonally adjusted data are available for selected ECI series. Seasonal adjustment removes the effects of events that follow a more or less regular pattern each year. These adjustments make nonseasonal patterns easier to identify. ECI series are seasonally adjusted using either direct or composite seasonally adjusted estimates. Industry and occupational series, such as construction and service occupations, are adjusted directly. More aggregate series, such as civilian or private industry workers, use composite estimates. The composite estimates could be obtained by aggregating either the industry or the occupational components, and the results may differ depending on which method is used. The aggregate seasonally adjusted ECI series are estimated by aggregating the component seasonally adjusted industry series. The seasonal adjustment factors are recalculated once a year. The March release contains data reflecting the newly updated seasonal adjustment factors. The historical data for the last five years are then revised based on the newly estimated factors. The seasonal factors for 1999, revised seasonally adjusted indexes, and 3-month percent changes for the past five years, are available on the Internet at (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>) or upon request.

The ECI sample is rotated approximately every five years; this makes it more representative and reduces respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis. The September 1999 index contains the second of several integrated National Compensation Survey (NCS)-ECI samples. Integrated samples result in an increase in the number of private industry establishments and occupations in the survey. The NCS-ECI sample will be completely integrated over the next three years.

The costs per hour worked of compensation components, based on March data from the ECI, are published in a separate news release titled "Employer Costs for Employee Compensation - March 1999," and in an annual bulletin, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, 1986-98, (Bulletin 2508). A description of the cost levels data (ECEC) is provided in the article "Analyzing Employers' Costs for Wages, Salaries, and Benefits" in the October 1987 issue of the Monthly Labor Review. This article, along with other ECEC research articles, also appears in the annual bulletin. The cost levels are calculated with current employment weights, rather than the fixed 1990 weights used in computing the ECI. Therefore, year-to-year changes in the cost levels usually differ from those in the ECI.

Because the ECI is a sample survey, it is subject to sampling errors. Sampling errors are differences that occur between the results computed from a sample of observations and those computed from all observations in the population. The estimates derived from different samples selected using the same sample design may differ from each other. A measure of the variation among these differing estimates is the standard error. It can be used to measure the precision with which an estimate from a particular sample approximates the expected result of all possible samples. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate from the survey differs from a complete population figure by less than the standard error. The chances are about 90 out of 100 that this difference would be less than 1.6 times the standard error. The statements of comparisons appearing in this publication are significant at a 1.6 standard error level or better, unless otherwise indicated. This means that for differences cited, the estimated difference is greater than 1.6 times the standard error of the difference.

Because standard errors vary from quarter to quarter, the ECI uses a five-year moving average of standard errors to evaluate published series. Currently, in the higher level aggregate series, the standard errors for 3-month changes are generally 0.1 percent or less; for 12-month changes, standard errors are generally 0.25 percent or less. Currently, in the lower level series, standard errors are generally 0.3 percent or less for 3-month changes and 0.6 percent or less for 12-month changes. Series found to have a higher average standard error for the five years ending December 1996 are footnoted in the tables.

BLS is evaluating ECI publication standards as part of its overall quality improvement plan. The first phase of this evaluation, a review of the statistical reliability of the ECI series, is complete. To improve the quality of the ECI estimates, the sample size is being increased and other initiatives, such as revising collection procedures, are being explored. All series will continue to be published until further notice, although standard errors for some series are large. The five-year moving average of standard errors for all

estimates (excluding seasonally adjusted series) will be available on the Internet site (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>) shortly after publication of the news release.

When comparing data by bargaining status, it is important to note that differences may be due to factors other than bargaining status, such as occupational and industry mix. For example, union occupations tend to be concentrated in blue-collar occupations within manufacturing industries. Thus, differences between blue-collar and white-collar pay or differences in manufacturing versus nonmanufacturing industries could explain such differences.

More detailed information on the ECI is available in several sources. These include annual bulletins-- Employment Cost Indexes and Levels, 1975-97, (Bulletin 2504), a chapter in the BLS Handbook of Methods (Bulletin 2490), "National Compensation Measures," and several articles published in the Monthly Labor Review and Compensation and Working Conditions. The annual bulletins are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, or Bureau of Labor Statistics, Publications Sales Center, P.O. Box 2145, Chicago, Illinois 60690, (312) 353-1880. Reprints of the articles and other descriptive pieces are available upon request by calling (202) 606-6199 or sending email to (ocltinfo@bls.gov). Current and historical data are available at the web site: (<http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>).

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 606-7828, Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) phone: (202) 606-5897, TDD Message Referral Phone Number: 1-800-326-2577.